



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**No. 090 – March 31, 2020**

**For more information contact:**  
Media contact: [Ron Olson](#), 517-243-1477  
Public inquiries:  
[DNR-ParksAndRecreation@Michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-ParksAndRecreation@Michigan.gov)

## **Crowded conditions close Tippy Dam Recreation Area; more closures likely**

*DNR encourages responsible recreation as it monitors  
COVID-19 risks at state parks and recreation areas*

**LANSING, MICH.** – To help slow the spread of the coronavirus and carry out Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's "[Stay Home, Stay Safe](#)" [Executive Order](#), the Department of Natural Resources is closely monitoring visitor levels and adherence to social-distancing measures at Michigan state parks and recreation areas and other DNR-managed locations.

Due to a surge in visitors at state parks over the last two weeks – including at Tippy Dam Recreation Area in Manistee County – DNR staff has observed many instances of improper social distancing (not keeping at least 6 feet between individuals) and visitors traveling long distances to visit these outdoor spaces.

Tippy Dam has seen a drastic increase in visitors, including people from all areas of the state. This type of nonessential travel could unintentionally increase the spread of COVID-19. To protect visitors, staff and nearby communities, the DNR has closed Tippy Dam Recreation Area, effective immediately, until further notice. The south side access, which is on land managed by Consumers Energy, also will be closed until further notice.

The closure is a result of a [Land Use Order of the Director](#) Amendment No. 4 of 2020, signed today by DNR Director Dan Eichinger. Anyone entering Tippy Dam Recreation Area by vehicle, foot or bicycle may receive a civil infraction with fines up to \$500.

For now, all other state parks and recreation areas, trails and boating access sites remain open to help provide local opportunities to get outdoors; however, social distancing practices must be adhered to in order to keep these state-managed lands open.

"The concern is twofold: residents traveling long distances and unintentionally spreading COVID-19 and visitors congregating too closely," said Ron Olson, chief of the DNR Parks and Recreation Division. "In order to continue to keep state parks open, we urge everyone to follow effective social distancing practices, including only visiting state parks locally and avoiding high-traffic areas within parks."

(more)

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## **Know before you go**

Anyone planning to visit any state-managed land is first encouraged to visit the [DNR COVID-19 response page](#) for updates on facility closures, changes in services and event/meeting cancellations. Follow [Michigan.gov/DNRClosures](https://www.michigan.gov/DNRClosures) for the latest information.

### **Please keep the following guidelines in mind:**

- Go out only if you're feeling healthy.
- Long-distance travel is discouraged unless it is essential.
- Individuals must maintain a minimum of 6 feet between themselves and people of other households. Anyone not following the social-distancing requirement may face misdemeanor violation/arrest penalties, including up to 90 days in jail and/or a fine up to \$500.
- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. If those aren't available, use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- When driving, keep windows slightly open to provide air flow. Do not drive with people who don't live in your household.
- If the parking is full when attempting to visit a park, recreation area, boating access site or trailhead, leave and choose a different location.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus).

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